



For Release: Tuesday, July 14, 2015

15-915-CHI

MIDWEST INFORMATION OFFICE: Chicago, Ill.

Technical information: (312) 353-1880 BLSInfoChicago@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/midwest

Media contact: (312) 353-1138

Occupational Employment and Wages in Grand Rapids-Wyoming — May 2014

Workers in the Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$19.88 in May 2014, about 12 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.71, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer noted that, after testing for statistical significance, no wages in the local area were higher than their respective national averages in 22 major occupational groups. Sixteen groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including legal; arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; and computer and mathematical.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 1 of the 22 occupational groups: production. Conversely, 13 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including food preparation and serving related; construction and extraction; and protective service. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Grand Rapids	United States	Grand Rapids	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$22.71	\$19.88*	-12
Management	5.0	4.5*	54.08	47.98*	-11
Business and financial operations	5.1	4.2*	34.81	28.40*	-18
Computer and mathematical	2.8	2.0*	40.37	33.16*	-18
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.9	39.19	32.11*	-18
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.4*	33.69	28.59*	-15
Community and social services	1.4	1.5	21.79	21.85	0
Legal	0.8	0.4*	48.61	37.87*	-22
Education, training, and library	6.2	5.7*	25.10	21.79*	-13
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.4	26.82	18.69*	-30
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	6.1	36.54	32.78*	-10
Healthcare support	2.9	3.1	13.86	13.65	-2
Protective service	2.4	1.4*	21.14	20.03	-5
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	7.8*	10.57	9.84*	-7
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	2.9	12.68	12.07*	-5
Personal care and service	3.1	2.3*	12.01	11.95	0
Sales and related	10.5	10.0	18.59	18.83	1
Office and administrative support	16.0	15.2*	17.08	16.16*	-5
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1*	12.09	11.66	-4
Construction and extraction	3.9	2.8*	22.40	21.04*	-6
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.7*	21.74	20.46*	-6
Production	6.6	13.3*	17.06	15.74*	-8
Transportation and material moving	6.8	(2)	16.57	13.62*	-18

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Grand Rapids is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

(2) Estimate not released.

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Grand Rapids-Wyoming had 54,070 jobs in production, accounting for 13.3 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.6-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$15.74, significantly below the national wage of \$17.06.

Some of the largest detailed occupations within the production group included team assemblers (12,120), helpers--production workers (5,380), and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (2,960). Among the higher paying jobs were power plant operators; and chemical equipment operators and tenders, with mean hourly wages of \$27.48 and \$26.97, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were tailors, dressmakers, and custom sewers (\$8.71) and slaughterers and meat packers (\$10.14). (Detailed occupational data for production are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/2014/may/oes_24340.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the production group. For instance, food and tobacco roasting, baking, and drying machine operators and tenders were employed at 13.3 times the national rate in Grand Rapids, and tool and die makers, at 8.3 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, bakers had a location quotient of 0.9 in Grand Rapids, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget.

Note

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2014 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, and November 2011. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 74.3 percent based on establishments and 70.5 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.1 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area included 3,097 establishments with a response rate of 74 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2014 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Grand Rapids-Wyoming, Mich. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Barry, Ionia, Kent, and Newaygo Counties.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/midwest. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/2014/may/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Production Occupations	54,070	2.0	\$15.74	\$32,740
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	2,960	1.7	26.87	55,890
Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers	440	0.7	17.50	36,410
Engine and Other Machine Assemblers	470	4.1	19.07	39,670
Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters	(5)	(5)	18.63	38,740
Fiberglass Laminators and Fabricators	110	1.9	13.91	28,930
Team Assemblers	12,120	3.6	14.46	30,080
Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other	1,980	2.8	15.62	32,490
Bakers	450	0.9	12.51	26,020
Butchers and Meat Cutters	220	0.5	14.74	30,660
Slaughterers and Meat Packers	40	0.2	10.14	21,080
Food and Tobacco Roasting, Baking, and Drying Machine Operators and Tenders	760	13.3	18.45	38,380
Food Batchmakers	1,090	3.0	14.55	30,270
Food Cooking Machine Operators and Tenders	180	1.6	11.75	24,440
Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	1,660	3.7	15.98	33,230
Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal and Plastic	250	3.4	23.35	48,560
Extruding and Drawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	(5)	(5)	17.52	36,450
Forging Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	80	1.2	13.29	27,640
Rolling Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	60	0.6	15.25	31,720
Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	1,510	2.6	15.88	33,030
Drilling and Boring Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	250	4.8	20.15	41,920
Grinding, Lapping, Polishing, and Buffing Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	400	1.9	15.64	32,530
Lathe and Turning Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	190	1.5	17.13	35,630
Milling and Planing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	150	2.2	18.66	38,820
Machinists	2,150	1.8	16.29	33,880
Foundry Mold and Coremakers	(5)	(5)	16.64	34,620
Molding, Coremaking, and Casting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	1,350	3.5	14.11	29,350
Multiple Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	520	1.8	15.37	31,980
Tool and Die Makers	1,900	8.3	24.17	50,280
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	1,310	1.2	16.60	34,520
Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	360	2.2	18.22	37,890
Heat Treating Equipment Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	(5)	(5)	16.43	34,170
Plating and Coating Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	510	4.7	12.97	26,990
Metal Workers and Plastic Workers, All Other	(5)	(5)	10.72	22,310
Prepress Technicians and Workers	240	2.2	16.46	34,240
Printing Press Operators	760	1.5	16.24	33,780
Print Binding and Finishing Workers	310	2.0	13.31	27,680
Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers	500	0.8	10.64	22,140
Sewing Machine Operators	300	0.7	12.54	26,080
Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers	(5)	(5)	8.71	18,110
Extruding and Forming Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Synthetic and Glass Fibers	60	1.0	15.36	31,960
Upholsterers	180	2.0	15.60	32,440

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014 - Continued

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	40	0.2	15.22	31,650
Furniture Finishers	90	1.9	15.00	31,190
Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood	150	1.1	13.23	27,510
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	300	1.4	13.50	28,090
Power Plant Operators	50	0.4	27.48	57,160
Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators	300	0.9	21.58	44,890
Plant and System Operators, All Other	90	2.4	19.86	41,320
Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	(5)	(5)	26.97	56,100
Crushing, Grinding, and Polishing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	100	1.1	17.07	35,510
Grinding and Polishing Workers, Hand	300	3.4	13.19	27,430
Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	470	1.3	15.70	32,650
Cutters and Trimmers, Hand	100	2.1	14.78	30,740
Cutting and Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	290	1.5	16.20	33,700
Extruding, Forming, Pressing, and Compacting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	300	1.5	13.47	28,010
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers ..	2,840	1.9	14.74	30,670
Jewelers and Precious Stone and Metal Workers	50	0.7	(5)	(5)
Dental Laboratory Technicians	60	0.5	16.95	35,260
Ophthalmic Laboratory Technicians	170	2.1	13.97	29,070
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders ..	2,310	2.0	11.91	24,780
Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	530	1.9	15.74	32,750
Painters, Transportation Equipment	90	0.6	16.74	34,820
Painting, Coating, and Decorating Workers	70	1.4	(5)	(5)
Photographic Process Workers and Processing Machine Operators	(5)	(5)	14.63	30,430
Adhesive Bonding Machine Operators and Tenders	110	2.0	15.44	32,120
Etchers and Engravers	60	2.4	16.29	33,890
Molders, Shapers, and Casters, Except Metal and Plastic	140	1.3	15.40	32,040
Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders ..	340	1.2	15.68	32,610
Helpers--Production Workers	5,380	4.3	11.65	24,240
Production Workers, All Other	1,380	2.1	14.49	30,130

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in Grand Rapids-Wyoming, MI, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_24340.htm

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimate not released.